

# Riverpath

Newsletter  
of  
PhiLANOR

Vol 3

ISSUE 1

.... And thus we come to Imbolg.

Somewhere behind the solemn grandeur of Samhain, the lusty joy of Beltaine and the festivities of Yule there stands the quiet calm ecstasy of Imbolg.

The origins of Imbolg are lost and any real significance of this Holy Day may also be lost in a culture of gross consumerism and psychic numbing. If it means anything to most people, it is little more than the childish charade of Ground Hog's day.

Yet the primeval meaning of Lady Day is deep within our Pagan spirits and if we but listen we can hear the ancient yet totally relevant message: "Courage."

Imbolg is a Gaelic word that means "in the belly". For indeed, Spring is in the belly of the Goddess. Imbolg is an ancient lunar festival. It may be the very oldest of all our Sabbats. Some recent Black Sea archeological sites date the Holy Day we call Imbolg back as far as 8500 bce.

Like most of our Holy Days, this one has also been appropriated by the Xians. They call it Candlemas or Lady Day. For the Xian it is the purification of Mary after the birth of Jesus. For Pagans it is a day of hope and dedication, of cleaning and preparation and promise.

To understand Imbolg, and to hearken to its message, we must leave the late 20th century c.e. and travel back in time. So let us return to the Eurasian shores and mountains from which the Celts and Gaels came, some 5000 years ago. Let us return to the grey days of late winter.

It is a time with few spare resources. There is no excess to feed those who are either non-productive or have no promise to be productive. What ever goes to the crippled, the feeble or those who lack emotional or mental abilities comes directly from an able care-giver's allotted share. When the able care-giver dies, the disabled dies too. Cruelly, pragmatically, only the fit survive.

Winter means hunger and cold. Illness and malnutrition erode the teeth and bones, and lack of fresh vegetables makes the mouth fester and bleed and the skin to break open in weeping sores. Worry chews at the spirit as the stored roots begin to rot, the scraps of smoked meat turn rancid and the grain begins to mold. Hunting is precarious. The hunters are out for days at a time, tracking fresh meat. They are not always successful.

The soup grows thin as do the people. The elderly and the infirm fall first to the cruel hand of hunger, and then the babies, wailing like the cold wind for the dried-up milk of their hungry mothers, wail no more. And their tiny bones are placed in clay jars -- until Imbolg. Some years there are only a few jars, other years there are many.

But there IS food, for those who would take it. There is the sacred seed grain, carefully stored in tall pitched jars. However, there can be no eating of the holy seed, for if this is eaten, everyone dies. In the meadows the ewes and she-goats, prudently guarded by the herders, swell with life. The newly dropped kids and lambs are protected from the starving people by a meat taboo (the forerunner of Lent.) So the courage to abide and endure, to watch while loved ones die, must be greater even than the grief and the ever gnawing hunger. Imbolg celebrates that courage.

First sacrifice takes place on Imbolg, to implore the return of the Earth's warmth and Her sweet green growing things. The first born lamb is offered so that the newly born child might live.

There are some years when Winter is reluctant to melt and Spring hesitates to blossom. In those years every clan and family has tiny pots of bones and no infant's prattle is heard. Then, in desperation, a human emissary is sent to entreat the Lady's return so that the people may live. The emissary must go willingly, knowingly and with courage -- and there is one less mouth to feed.

Into the newly-kindled purifying flames of Imbolg are given the names and memories of the old and the infirm, the tiny jars and the bitter tears of the bereaved.

Then the seed is brought forth and the Lady's blessing is placed upon it. The tools which will be used to plant and tend it are consecrated and their edges are hardened or honed, the hames and traces mended, the hafts and hods oiled and all the fittings tightened.

Five thousand years ago, ailing, hungry, yet courageous people agreed to endure their want and loss for a while longer so that there would be a future community. Individuals faced personal death with courage that the greater whole should survive. They searched the warm nooks and crannies for the first green growing plants and in joy they drank grass soup. And they turned their minds from the gnawing in their bellies and the aching in their hearts and looked forward to the new planting.

Although many of us no longer observe the meat taboo and most of us have a 24 hour grocery store somewhere within driving distance, we too search avidly for the first sign of green and the first ray of hope. The earliest snowdrop and humblest crocus, tiny and half hidden by some sheltering rock or tree root, are far more precious to us than the most elegant rose of summer.

And we who live in these days of over-population and ecological catastrophe are also bidden to be courageous. For it takes a high heart to hear the reports of doom and disaster and yet believe that Life will not only continue but will somehow be fostered by beneficent technologies and a human civilization that seeks to care for Gaia rather than to exploit Her.

It takes courage as we watch as members of our community are stricken by AIDS or cancer and we stand helpless to cure them. It takes courage to reach out in love and acknowledge the humanness of the demented man on the steam grate. And even now, the Spring comes slowly. It will take even greater courage to make the necessary sacrifices in both our "rightness" and our lifestyles. To relinquish both the disposable diapers and our "unalienable right" to breed like rabbits. To commit ourselves and our taxes to reviving our cities that are dying from crack and corruption, to rescuing our people who are perishing from racism, addiction and hopelessness, and to redeem our culture which is dying from television and nintendo, petulance and greed. To do any of this and not despair demands a great and enduring courage. The courage of Imbolg.

And thus we come to Imbolg, seeking the first glimmer of Spring's promise; honing our tools and looking beyond the bleakness of the 10 o'clock news.



There are some small slivers of hope: fluorocarbon production and use is declining slightly; Switzerland is finally concerned about its deforestation of the Amazon; DuPont is starting to process recycled plastic in the Philadelphia region into products that may reduce the clear cutting of hundreds of acres of trees; a new way of recycling human sewage using only natural organisms and sunlight for energy has proven successful; an organism that eats oil spills and gives off oxygen as the waste product has been developed at Texas A&M; families sundered for 30 years hold each other again as the Berlin Wall lies in rubble. And in a warm corner, a crocus blooms.

May Sweet Bride's fire warm you through these long cold days and may Our Lady's courage nourish you and keep you strong and may you blessed be ... and thus we come to Imbolg.

MR.



#### CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- Feb. 1 Riverpath is in the Mail!
- Feb. 2 Lunar and Traditional Imbolg. Let us purify ourselves and dream of new beginnings. Goddess is unveiled, the time of Chaos ends.
- Feb. 9 Mother Moon. Draw the plans for your garden and order your seeds and plants.
- Feb. 17 Crone Moon.
- Feb. 20 Psychological First Aid Module 1  
Crisis Intervention/Suicide Prevention  
(215) 368-1398
- Feb. 24 Wiccan Women's Pot Lunch. (215) 368-1398  
PhilANOR General Membership Meeting  
First Unitarian Church 2125 Chestnut St  
Phila. 7:30
- Feb. 25 Dark Moon.
- Mar. 4 Maiden Moon
- Mar. 11 Mother Moon. Start planning your celebration of Earth Day, April 22.
- Mar. 17 Celtic Festival, Bring Back the Snakes, Ireland was better off Pagan!  
MotherChant Coven, (215) 441-0149
- Mar. 19 Crone Moon. Recover from Celtic Festival.
- Mar. 20 Eostar. 12:18pm GST (4:19pm EST) Greet the Sun with a joyful noise for the balance has changed, She has returned! Re-read the Myth of Ishtar.
- Mar. 26 Dark Moon
- Apr. 2 Maiden Moon  
DST, set your clocks ahead one hour.
- Apr. 10 Mother Moon. Sow seeds for plants that fruit or set seeds above the ground.
- Apr. 14 PhilANOR General Meeting. Annual Dues payable. First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St. Phila. 7:30 pm.  
(215) 441-0149
- Apr. 15 Last day to order plants from plant sale.
- Apr. 18 Crone Moon. Plant cole crops, sow seeds for plants that fruit or set roots below the ground.
- Apr. 22 EARTH DAY! Plant a Tree! Pray for healing, pick up a block's worth of trash, protest disposable diapers and styrofoam. Clean your attic and basement, get real about all that good stuff you "might use someday" and give it to some one who really will. Get a Rain barrel, put a brick in your toilet tank. Celebrate being alive with your Mother!
- Apr. 25 Dark Moon

#### DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

- May 22-28 Rites of Spring, Athenor Fellowship, Northern Mass.
- June 14-17 Free Spirit Rising Fest, FSA Delaware
- July 15, Pagan Pathways Picnic, PhilANOR, Philadelphia Area

## PhilANOR

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting

**Feb 24 7:30 pm**

This is a very important meeting. We will be re-constituting committees, setting up the activities calendar, and we will discuss and plan the summer Pagan Picnic in July. Finally, but not least we will vote on and admit new members.

Reports on our application for Non-profit status, resolution of RiverPath and PhilANOR's relationship and the possibility of the Farrar's coming to Philadelphia will be presented.

In addition we will have a healing ritual for any and everyone with colds, flu-symptoms, aches pains and even more serious illnesses. Please bring a flower if you are going to participate. If you are going to represent someone who can't be there, please also bring a flower for them.

The RiverPath Newsletter is printed six (6) times a year on the following schedule:

Issue	Pub. date	Submission deadline
Pre-Samhain	Oct. 1	Sept. 21.
Pre-Yule	Dec. 1	Nov. 21
Pre-Imbolg	Jan. 21	Jan. 10
Pre-Beltaine	April 1	Mar. 21
Pre-Litha	June 1	May 21
Pre-Lammas	July 21	July 10

If you have news or an event that will occur after the Publication date of any issue, PLEASE get the news to me by the submission deadline. Even if you have to call it in, I would rather take it over the phone than miss it.

RiverPath is the networking newsletter of PhilANOR. The Opinions expressed here-in do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the members of PhilANOR. Both RiverPath and PhilANOR are non-profit organizations. NO salary or tangible compensation of any kind is given to anyone who writes or edits this rag. RiverPath owns no assets, except half of a file cabinet.

It is not the purpose of RiverPath to print rituals, recipes, herbal information, chants, charms or poetry. There are many fine publications which all ready serve that function and do it very well indeed. The names and addresses of some of the best can be found on page of this journal. RiverPath's purpose is to provide a forum for opinions, news, and coming events which concern the readers. Contributors should be aware that although I try not to edit any contribution, sometimes for the sake of space or comprehension I must. I will try to check with the author before doing so if time permits.



An Anthropologist's thoughts on the Concept of  
Pagan Community.

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In 2 previous issues of RiverPath, Maeve Rhea has discussed the idea of a Pagan Community. I too would like to share my thoughts on this idea.

When I think of a community I think of the people who live in my neighborhood, my co-workers and other people I see everyday. We come from different cultures, different backgrounds and have ideas and goals we pursue individually. The same can be said of Pagans I know. When we speak of a Pagan community we are acknowledging our differentness, uniqueness and recognizing ourselves as a separate community or culture within a non-Pagan society.

As an anthropologist I define culture as a group of people and their shared understandings concerning their behavior and how the world works. These precepts are learned from other members of the society through observation, myth and story. All cultures have visible and invisible signs to indicate membership. This may include hairstyle, ornaments/ornamentation or mannerisms. In Guatemala, for example, each Maya community has its own style of dress and unique rituals for celebrating holidays. Through language, symbolism and world view they demonstrate that they are all Mayan.

What sets our Pagan community off from others? Unlike the Maya we do not rely on elaborate folk costumes to denote our membership in the Pagan community. However, some of us do wear pentagrams or other non-Judaic-Christian objects. One current fad calls for us to wear green buttons as a mark of solidarity.

Pagans in the western world have had to rely on non-tangible ways to demonstrate "Pagan-ness" for 2000 years. That is culture.

Pagan culture is definable by Goddess forms, alternative beliefs and folk culture. The word "wicca" comes from the Anglo-Saxon root, meaning to craft, make, bend, do. Playing with this word we find that we call ourselves Wiccan, Witches, Craftspeople, we are "in the Craft."

Our beliefs originated when humans first notice the regular change of the seasons. These ideas are also found in the diverse influences of the Greek, Druid, Saxon, Native Amerind and Shamanic beliefs.

Our culture is also marked by its contact with Christianity and the Burning Times. Old beliefs were revitalized in the 1950's and 1960's to form modern Pagan culture. There have always been many Pagan groups and Wiccan traditions (not all following the same paths) but we all come from the same past.

Although we may walk different paths one thing we can all agree on is the Wiccan Rede. "Do what thou wilt an it harm none." This can also be defined as the golden rule (Do unto others ...) How do we use this idea to continue creating our culture and community? I think we can achieve the goal of a strong community through ritual and action.

In the ritually altered state we are tied to our shared past through memory. This creates a bond to the present time. Whether it is as a solitary or as a covener we reaffirm our commitment to Wicca as a sane life-affirming philosophy. Even a solitary knows that while he or she is working, other Pagans are casting circles and celebrating solstices. Coven and networking relationships replace the close kinship and community relationships lost in the 20th century. However, a Holiday Pagan is no better than a Sunday Christian. This means considering the meaning of Pagan philosophy and the consequences of your actions.

The second way to create solidarity is through action. If you would do what will harm none that means helping others. This can encompass a variety of activities (undertaken within the constraints of personal time and obligation.) Wicca teaches reverence for Earth, Sky, and human life. Recycle; organize a group to pick up trash in your community; plant a tree. Make a donation to charity, take old clothes to Goodwill, salute the Moon and Her Goddesses; volunteer to help the elderly or the homeless. My teacher in Craft told me "As you know, so do you owe." I take this to mean that I am obliged to share my knowledge of Craft with others, whether they seek to walk our path or just want to know that Witches aren't warty hags.

If we want to live as part of the Circle, in balance and harmony with ourselves and the environment, we must take responsibility for ourselves. Through ritual and actions such as I have outlined above, we make our belief in Paganism a reality. Culture does not form in a vacuum and humans do not grow in isolation. We have no community if we are all isolated. It is the ties between solitaires, covens and Pagan groups across the country that are our community. Our culture grew out of our past. In the Yule issue of RiverPath, "Bog Trotter" pointed out the need for Pagans to know their own history. If we learn what our culture really is, i.e. what we believe, and are able to create a strong community, we have already taken the first steps toward creating a society that can accept our beliefs.

Melia

OBSERVATIONS ON THE YULE GATHERING

Raven, aka Erich VonHalkind

Greetings, my friends.

Yule has come and gone, a new year, (cowan, that is) has begun, and to most of us the Yule circle/party is now just a memory. For me it is an extremely pleasant memory.

Most of the feedback I heard was extremely positive, and I feel that this feedback reflects well on PhilANOR and the Pagan community. The event itself was well organized, from the planning stages to actually pulling it off. As a member of the planning committee, I saw that my fellow members were ardent and dedicated to making the evening a success. In light of comments made by various members in the last issue of RiverPath on the responsibility required of people who volunteer for projects and committees, it was great to see that everyone had their particular area of responsibility well organized and under control.

The biting cold and rain outside didn't deter the festive mood that the decorating committee produced and the seemingly endless table of food was very well received by all (including a certain hungry meeting minutes recorder.)

The ritual itself (lead marvelously by Lady Epona and Oisin (Bill) was a truly mystical and fulfilling experience for me, and when we broke the circle, I came away feeling a lot lighter than I had when I first arrived earlier that evening.

Lady Nayan's dancing instruction was a kick (and a step and a spin), and even IF we messed up a step, we had fun doing it.

Unfortunately, I had to leave so I missed the rest of the festivities, but I trust that a terrific time was had by all.

Well, I've run out of virtues to extol, so the only thing left to say is "Thanks" to all who helped, contributed, taught, etc., etc. and made the Yule gathering such a success.

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#### THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN---

Last month RiverPath carried a great deal of information about how people should behave in circle. This is a very important issue. Everyone who attends a public or private ritual should try not to bother or offend the other attendees or the HP/S. This is common courtesy.

The other side of the situation, however, is more than common courtesy. This involves the responsibility of the HP/S to conduct a safe responsible ritual. Unfortunately, not all people who pretend to know what Wicca is about actually do know, and some that do know deliberately use their knowledge for the wrong purposes.

Some time ago, Maeve Rhea and I discussed the problems of what to look for in joining a new group. Maeve Rhea put together a lengthy article on this subject which needs to be condensed before publication. Hopefully this will happen in the near future, but after hearing several horror stories in the last months, I felt it necessary to mention a few things here.

The first middle and last rule of Wicca "Thou shalt harm none" applies to yourself as well as to others. Never, under any circumstances, do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. A HP/S will understand and respect this. If someone tries to force you into something you don't want to do, leave!!!

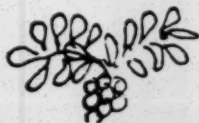
A young woman recently told me that she and few other "first timers" attended a group meeting. During the course of the ritual the High Priest (HP) asked the participants to swear allegiance to each other and to him. Many of these people were meeting for the first time and felt strange doing this, but did it anyway because the HP supposedly knew what he was doing.

The young woman went on to say that several other things happened during the ritual that made her feel uncomfortable. She wanted to leave but felt she couldn't break the circle. She stayed, and even went back again because she trusted the Priest. Later she left the group, feeling abused and afraid of "Wicca."

I am personally aware of a man who has a great deal of power and knowledge. This man will offer guidance and support to a seeker, usually female. His line is that he was sent to earth to help rid the earth of evil (ever hear this one before?) and he is willing to give particular help to her. She must, in order to receive this help, follow his directions without asking questions. He does not use this power for sex, rather he becomes a psychic vampire, feeding off the energy of his victim. I firmly believe that he was instrumental in the mental breakdown of at least one woman in the Phila. area.

Remember "Thou shalt harm none. If you really understand and apply this to yourself as well as to others, and you follow your own inner guides, you will not go wrong in the Craft.

Magickal Mallard.



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#### THE EDGE OF THE COIN--

The letter written by Magickal Mallard struck a very responsive note in me. As both a HPS and a networking group leader I have deep convictions of what being Pagan leadership entails.

Yes, it is the responsibility of the individual to remove his or herself from situations that are unpleasant or abusive. It is the also responsibility of the individual to behave properly within the confines of sacred space. BUT, it is the ultimate responsibility of the HPS and/or HP to ensure that the space is indeed sacred and safe.

Let me be clear. Neither Magickal Mallard nor I are referring to the normal frictions of individuals working within groups. We realize that not everyone will get along with everyone else. There are often differences of methods, opinions and personalities. This is to be expected in the normal course of relationships within such a highly psychic community as our own. You may not like the working style of one HPS or HP and the personality of another might set your teeth on edge. Remember every situation has as many "truths" as there are observers. Often a group leader will find it necessary to push on self-imposed limits, to break people out of their ruts, commonplace molds and entrenched "rightness-es". These are not the issues that I am addressing here.

As Magickal Mallard mentioned, we are working on a handbook that will provide seekers and leaders alike with guidelines. But I believe it is timely to present a few of the more pertinent and serious ones here.

1. NO CREDIBLE COVEN OR GROUP WILL FORCE YOU TO ENGAGE IN ANY ACT THAT IS HUMILIATING, DEMEANING OR ABUSIVE. If you feel that the actions of a group or coven are not suitable for you, leave. Don't ever be afraid to say "NO" to a situation that is making you feel as though you are being used. Get out of the situation. If you feel threatened or frightened do not hesitate to contact a reputable Community Elder.

2. NO CREDIBLE COVEN, GROUP OR LEADER WILL EVER RESORT TO PHYSICAL ABUSE. We hold that the physical being of each person is sacred space and we do not bring violence into sacred space.

3. While any teacher can ask that her or his students help defray the cost of instruction materials, site rental etc. a real Witch will not ask for large amounts of money for teaching or healing, and no real Witch will take a penny for sacred ritual workings. If you are being asked to pay or "donate" hundreds of dollars for an initiation, the person is a fraud.

MR Y

#### NOTICE! ALL APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP NOTICE!

All persons who wish to present their application for membership in PhilANOR at the FEB. 24 1990 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, 7:30 AT THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH, 2125 CHESTNUT ST. PHILADELPHIA must have their completed applications in to the Corresponding Secretary NO LATER THAN FEB. 10!! Your completed application must be signed, the "anti-satanic clause" must be signed and your sponsor's name must be included.

Please remember that both you and your sponsor must be at the meeting. It is your responsibility to arrange meeting times with your sponsor, and you must make sure that you will have attended the required two (2) PhilANOR meetings or PhilANOR functions by the General membership meeting date FEB. 24, 1990!

If you have already sent in your membership dues, they will not be applied until your membership status has been voted on and approved by the general membership at that meeting on FEB. 24, 1990 AT 7:30.

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## Response to the Reader Survey.

The response rate was very good! Most mundane publications are happy if they receive a 6% return rate. Our return rate was 25%.

Many of the people who responded are members of PhilANOR, but over 50% were not. Half had read RiverPath for over a year. Almost everyone read the whole thing.

- Topics and items that readers would like to see covered:
- Diversity of Traditions; Pagan world view, role in the late 20th century; how to live as a Pagan surrounded by "Jesus Freaks"; Green politics and Pagan ideas.
- Paths of study, instruction, guidance for novice Pagans and solitaires.
- Poetry, music, and art work.
- Gender orientations and outreach.
- Opinions on: Pagan book reviews, on people, more editorials, solitary US coven affiliations.
- Information on:
  - Crystals            Tarot            Herbalism
  - Drug Use and Magick,    Ethics
  - Healing            Magick            Patience
  - Pornography Gossip
  - More Coven reports, more feature articles
  - Outside contributions
  - Extended Coming Events
  - Listings and Networking for central NJ
  - Maeve Rhea's studies(?)

25 people replied that they would be willing to write for RiverPath but only four of these gave a name and address and phone number.

I'm waiting to hear from the other 21!

In view of the above response I am looking for 3 or 4 reliable people who will commit themselves to writing one of the following columns:

News About Local Pagans: A friendly gossip column that will keep people informed as to local community news; could include information as to when and where Pagan artists, and performers are appearing, events that Pagans might find pertinent and other doings that are of interest to the members of our community. The sort of thing that might appear in this column might be birthday greetings, birth and handfasting announcements, and notices if someone needs get well cards or visits.

Special reports. One report per issue: in-depth interviews with local/national Pagans, Coven leaders, Elders. Investigations of the differences and similarities between different Trads. etc.

Trash or Treasure: Book review column. One or two books per issue.

The Philosopher's Retort: A column devoted to a philosophical inquiry concerning the meaning of being Pagan. This writer should be willing to quote sources and material that the readers can use to investigate their beliefs and learn the historical and sociological basis for those beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. This column is designed to provide a forum for rational questions and well researched answers and to assist the reader in forming logically sound magickal beliefs. Will run every other issue.

To everyone who responded, THANK YOU!!!

## Outreach to Incarcerated pagans.

In the past few months a number of incarcerated Pagans have written to RiverPath seeking correspondence and contact with people who share the same ideologies. The editor does not pretend to claim intimate knowledge concerning the justice of their cases. Yet, innocent or not, these persons are deserving of human regard and response.

Response is sometimes difficult. Prison officials legally should not discriminate against Pagan correspondence, publications and reading materials, but the experience of this and other journals indicates that they do.

In fact, a common theme from all most all of these incarcerated persons is that the fact that they are Witches or Pagans is used to make their situation more harsh: they are subjected to unusual treatment and the charges brought against them were exacerbated because of their religious belief-system.

Other religions have groups such as the Jewish Anti-Defamation League. These groups have at their disposal substantial amounts of money and expert professional resources to fight discrimination against their members. Unfortunately, the Pagan community has no group of attorneys and criminal experts who are on the look out to make sure that the book isn't being thrown at a young Pagan kid simply because he broke a law and he was wearing a pentagram. It is time we did.

The Pagan community is in various stages of growth. The wide open personal freedom of the 70's is maturing into a community ethic of responsibility for the well being of others with in the culture. It may be time for the Pagan community to acknowledge an obligation to care for not only the psychic well being of these incarcerated prisoners but also to watch that their civil liberties are not being denied because of their religion.

Of course we can turn to the ACLU, but they are always overworked and under-funded. Besides, the Pagan ethic of responsibility demands that we first try to help ourselves.

After all, even the Christians believe is it a moral duty to succor the imprisoned. Can we do less?

## Crisis Intervention/Suicide Prevention Module

1st module of Principle of Psychological First Aid. Other modules will be offered depending on demand. This module will fulfill ADF Circle 1 Counseling Track.

Module 1 will meet for 12 hours--3 Tues. evenings: Feb. 20, 27, and Mar. 6.  
Hours: 7 to 11 pm.

FEE: \$15 per module for ADF/PhilANOR members  
\$30 for all others.

## Pre-registration is required!

All Pagan counselors and Witches should upgrade their crisis intervention skills. A must for any person who deals with groups of people.

Domi O'Brien, the instructor is a M. Ed and has 17 years of private practice in this area.



WICCAN WOMEN'S CLUB POT LUCK LUNCH  
AND GET TOGETHER  
February 24, 1990 at 1 pm.  
Call Domi to arrange food & directions  
Accessible to SEPTA line R5



### Esotericon Festival Report

On January 12th through the 14th the 7th annual Esotericon was held at the Holiday Inn Jetport in Elizabeth NJ. Six or more PhilANOR members joined about 150 other people for the event. Although it is not specifically described as a "Pagan" event, most of the attendees and most of the guest speakers are Pagan.

Esotericon is of particular interest in that it gives one a chance to come into contact with the notable members of the Pagan community. People whom we do not often see at the East Coast gatherings, such as Selena Fox, Dennis Carpenter, Jane Sibley, Diana Paxson, and Raymond Buckland, led rituals, ran workshops and gave lectures covering a broad variety of topics.

The lectures and the workshops were informative and the rituals were powerful but for me the greatest joy came from the people I was with. Every so often in a person's magickal life a group of people comes together whose energies blend harmoniously. So harmoniously that they produce a spiritual wraith that encompasses the group with an energy that exceeds the sum of its parts.

Such was the case. Four separate individuals joined to form a "cell"--a ball of pure joy built of our mutual love and respect.

As I drove home on Sunday afternoon I was still enveloped by that joy. Magickal memories drifted through my mind. I felt like I was floating on a cloud. A surge of purest joy swelled up within me and caused me to shout out loud "OH Goddess, I love You!" "Thank You Lady" I added as I looked off into the sky, where I was answered by the appearance of a brilliant sun dog--a rainbow jewel that seemed to float in mid-air. It was the first sun dog I've seen in many years and it stayed within my field of vision for the next 50 miles, never fading until I was almost home.

Thank You Lady, and thank you: Kristy, Kathy and Siobhra.

Blessed Be....

Ba'gheera Mayfire.

\*Note sun dogs' are rare meteorological phenomena that occur when there is exactly the right amount of moisture in the upper stratosphere and the temperature are very low. Sort of like floating ice prisms.



#### PATRICIA HARPER:

I am being held in segregation on pre-trial charges since June 16th. No bail has been set for me. I wait. I have no access to a library or any other type of spiritual mental or physical contact with others. Therefore I would treasure any literature/correspondence through the mail.

Patricia Harper  
17 Mallison Falls Rd.  
Windham, ME 04062.

#### HamarKhis:

Male Witch, 28, seeks networking with Wiccans who share interests: Egyptian, Celtic, Scottish, Gardnerian Traditions; Sirian Magick; Guitar, poetry... Definitely NO Christian, Gnostic, Cabalistic, Enochian, Z-J-X's, please.

Blind Address #JD-015

#### Eclectic Solitary:

In southern NJ. I am interested in Egyptian Path, would like to meet others with same interests.

Blind Address Service #GC-251

### FINDING A SPONSOR.

It is usually not difficult to find someone who is willing to sponsor you for PhilANOR membership. You must attend two PhilANOR functions or meetings and during those times you should try to get to know people. When you have hit it off with some one, then feel them out to see if they would sponsor you. The sponsor does not have to be an officer of PhilANOR. Every general member is perfectly qualified and entitled to sponsor new members.

You must then arrange to meet with the sponsor so that they can get to know you better. After all, the sponsor must be willing to stand up in the meeting and state, on her/his honor and to the best of her/his knowledge that "I know of no reason why membership in PhilANOR should be denied to Ms. X or Mr. Y" Notice they don't have to extol your virtues or explain your foibles, they merely have to be willing to state that they don't have any reason to believe you are not suitable for membership.

A good way to arrange those meetings is to meet the sponsor on neutral ground such as a restaurant or coffee shop. Then you can speak freely. If you find that you like each other, great. If for some reason you feel that this is not the right person, please look for someone who will be more sympathetic to your feelings and goals.

### PLEASE HELP!!!

Some of RP's readers are not getting their subscriptions because either I have a bad PO Box number, the wrong address OR the PO isn't paying any attention to your Magickal names. If you know someone who should be receiving RP and isn't, PLEASE have them write to me.

Issues that have been returned recently:  
SPRING  
MOONSTONE  
Rhea C.



#### Erlynn:

I am a solitary Witch who seeks correspondence and possible apprenticeship with a serious mentor in Philadelphia or surrounding areas.. I have been studying for several years, interested in herbalism and crystal work.

Please Write: Blind Address Service

#GSG-48

#### Pheonyx:

I seek pagan individuals and friends in South NJ. I am following a solitary Wiccan path.

#JL-060

#### HELP!

Newly Incarcerated Wiccan seeks correspondence with all like minded people. I will answer all who write. Please hurry, I'm surrounded by Jesus Crispies.

David Dalton  
Men's Correctional Center  
17 Mallison Falls Rd.  
Windham, ME 04062



THIS IS THE FINAL TIME THESE NETWORKING AD WILL RUN UNLESS:

I get a signed note from you saying to continue the present ad OR I get a new networking ad form in the mail. Ad form is on the front of this issue.

**EARTH:**

Radical Faerie Circle Forming to Create Lesbian and Gay Spiritual Bonding. Call:

EARTH at (215) 735-4249

OR SUNGAY at (215) 88-1578

**Merry Meet!!**

Novice Female Witch, age 34 seeks other novices with whom to share the joys of our newfound paths. My interests are gem lore, candle magick, the tarot and more!

Bright Blessings.... Blind Address:  
ZC-104

**Greyfox:**

Solitary Native American Indian, single; teetotaler; short, slender and sensitive, into camping, hiking, quantum physics, Mensa, Morita, feminism, SF; seeks mate.

Please write: Greyfox  
907 Iroquois Court  
Harrisburg, PA 17109

**Melia:**

I am interested in starting or joining a Goddess oriented or balanced Goddess/God coven in the West Chester Area. Please contact me at:

117 W. Chestnut  
West Chester, Pa 19380.

**Siobhra:**

I follow a Celtic Path and call myself a Witch. I desire contact with others of like mind in Eastern PA, NJ.

Please Write:  
PO Box 261  
Chalfont, PA 18914-0261

**Novice Green Witch:**

Ecologically concerned female who is young, practical and Pagan seeks correspondence from like minded people. Interests include herbs, poetry, Celtic folklore, dreams, magic and Deep Ecology.

Write: Blind Address Service  
#NGW1

**Rhea:**

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. Similar minds speak out. Anyone out there in the So. Jersey Shore Area?

PO Box 155  
Palmyra NJ  
08065-0155

**Baird:** Male solitary Witch seeks apprenticeship in traditional Wiccan training in balanced coven in Phila. area. Would like to join/form a discussion group. Special interests include healing and Tarot.

PO Box 18332  
Philadelphia, PA 19120

**Greetings!** Novice Solo Practicing Witch in NJ seeking others of like mind. I love the earth, animals, plants, herbal healing, et al. Many blessings. Blind Address #LC-710

**TABITHA**

PO Box 92  
Elm, PA 17521

I am seeking others in Lancaster County area who share interests in Wicca and Spiritual growth. Please Write!

**Richard Pryor**  
600 Whittaker Ave. Apt 2-1  
Trenton, NJ. 08611

New transplant to Trenton area is seeking people who follow the Old Ways. Very interested in finding a group with which I can work.

**M.A.:**

Bisexual Female Pagan. Artist, 28. Eclectic, easy going diverse interest in arts, sciences, New Age activities. Seeking like-minded sincere spiritual woman for friendship. B\*B\*

Write: M.A.

PO Box 44  
Springhouse, PA 19477.

**Osselmann, Dawn**

1500 Circleville Rd. #25

State College, Pa. 16803

"Solitary, completing PhD in Comparative Lit. Interested in networking with area pagans."

**Amusarre**

PO Box 206

Westtown, Pa. 19395-0206

"Solitary female who has been practicing on a serious, regular basis for a year."

**Kevin**

My main interest is in the OLD ways of the Craft. I like studying deeply into what is not common knowledge. I dabble in Herbal healing and the Tarot. I welcome any and all correspondence.

Blind Address # CC-494

**HERA**

520 N. Lemon St. #F-9

Media, Pa. 19063

Mature woman new to the ways of Goddess seeks contact with other women willing to share their experience.

**CUTHWOLF**

P.O. Box 1168

Brodheads ville, Pa. 18322

Magus of the Old Ways seeks Female eclectic solitary to share many paths of magick. Background in the Farrars helpful.

**ANGHARAD**

PO Box 30413

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Philadelphia couple seek local Wiccan Groups and individuals (with interest in magick, ritual, Celtic studies and Bardic trads. We have backgrounds in theater and music.

**Greenstein, Stacey**

P.O. Box A111, Ramsey, NJ 07446

"Uninitiated bisexual male, 20. Interested in learning more about the Craft and other related fields. Blessed Be..."

**West Chester, PA. Area:**

Eclectic solitary for 20+ years wishes to form discussion group w/other solitaires in WC area for information exchange, serious studies of Goddess and the Gods. If and when it feels right, light ritual. Blind Address:

BWC-380

**Demefergus**

922 S 49th

Philadelphia, PA 19143

University City area Pagan; single male in late 30's. Celebrates and studies eclectic Pagan Paths. Seeking others who enjoy ritual, fellowship, conversation and good food.

**CELTIC Pagan** seeking correspondence with those of a like mind from various areas who are willing to share knowledge that will aid our mutual spiritual development. Have a variety of interests, willing to learn more.

Blind Address # KM-206

**DOMI**

Box 242

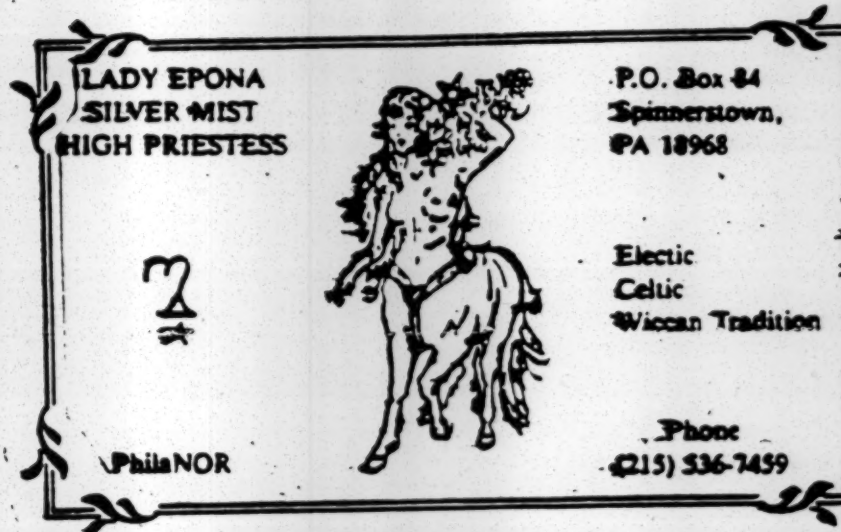
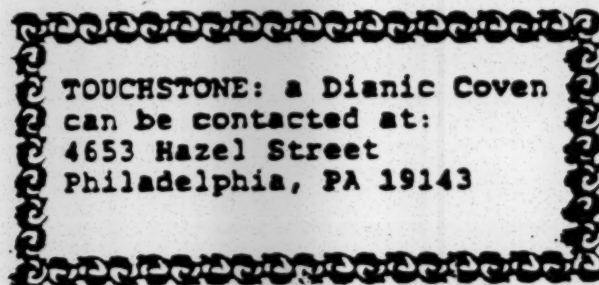
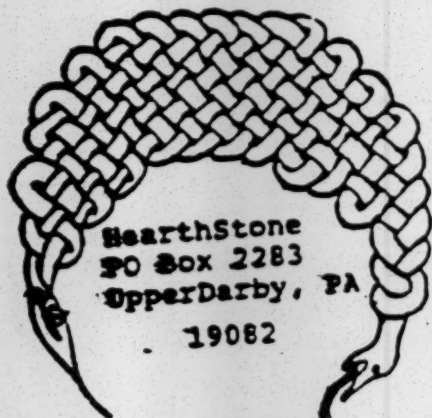
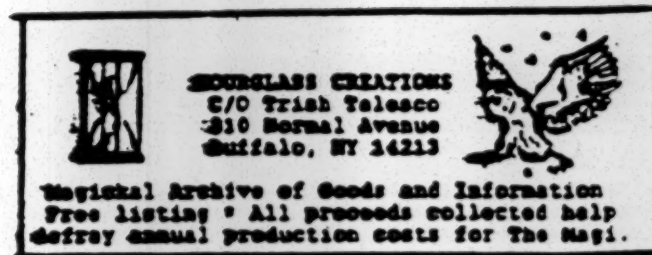
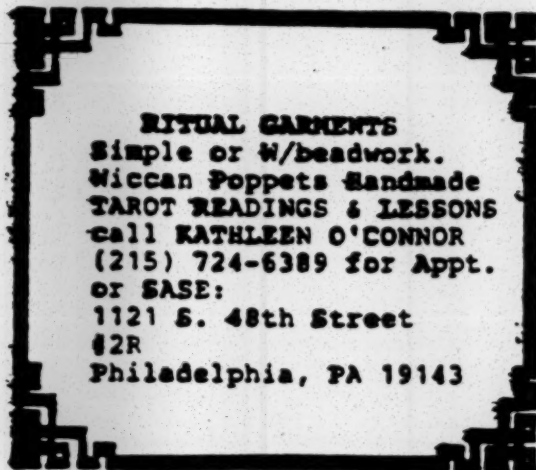
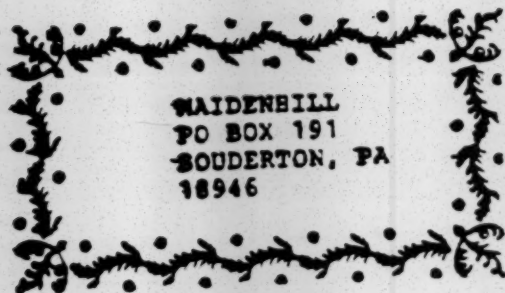
Worcester, PA. 19490

Any other Old-Religions home-schoolers out there? We'd like to share ideas, materials, etc.

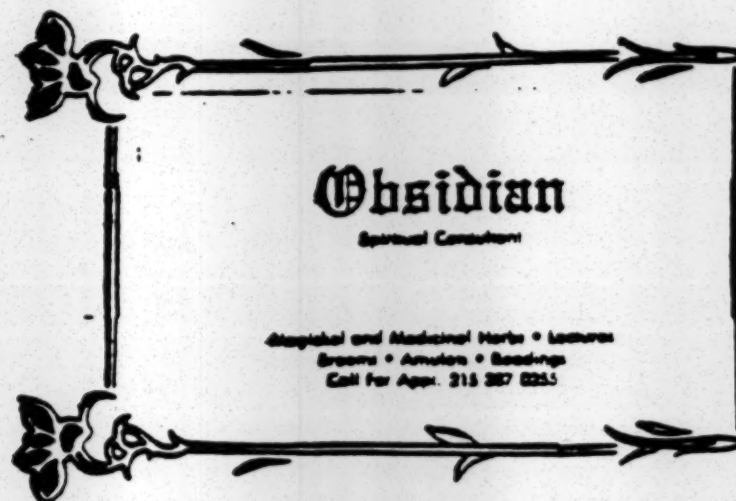
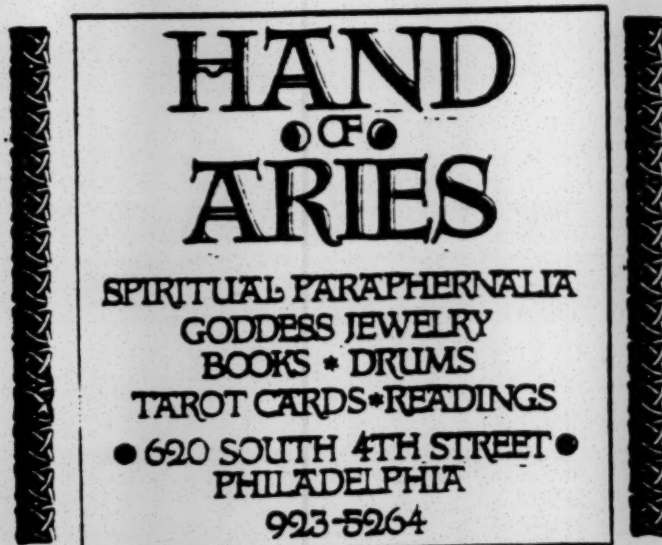


# WITCH WAY

## Groups & Resources



Poetic Sorcery, "Hour of DeWolf"  
Hard Cover 283 Poems \$9.95 in book stores  
\$7.50 from the author, write to:  
Fletcher DeWolf, Route One, Bristol, N.H. 03222  
\*\*\*\*free postage and handling\*\*\*\*





PhilANOR Public Response Committee responds to un-truths in local Suburban Newspaper

On Jan. 22, the Lansdale Reporter ran a large article that featured an "expert" on the occult, bashing Witches again and lumping our practices in with 'satanists' and criminal abuse activities. The following is the letter that was written in response by the only committee that PhilANOR has left. In case you didn't know it, there are always some people who are utterly reliable.

I include Tea Tepea's letter not only because it contains essential information that you need to know but it serves as an excellent guideline for responding to articles and allegations such as found in the mentioned article.

Jan. 22, 1990  
Editor  
The Reporter  
Lansdale, PA 19446

I read with interest the account in today's Reporter of the recent appearance in the area of self-professed former occultist Penny Hoeflinger. As an experienced counselor, I have an interest in the way that victims of sexual abuse reframe their experience in their process of healing. As a sociologist, I have an interest in the way that myth and rumor reshape to changing societal conditions, from the medieval accusations of ritual murder by Jews to late 1800's accusations against Catholics to today's urban legends of contaminated food and Satanic mutilations of animals. As a priestess of the ancient Triple Goddess, a Celtic Wiccan Order teacher and a member of the Council of Lore of Ar nDraocht Fein (the Druid Fellowship), I have an interest in correcting the misconceptions in the article.

Satanism is a Christian heresy. It begins with an acceptance of the Biblical account of Creation and turns the theology around. I am familiar with its belief system only through my readings in sociology of religion, for it has nothing to do with my belief system. However, the FBI states that there are no instances of Satanic crime and the handbook for military chaplains calls it a human-potential movement, with no beliefs or practices in conflict with military service.

I am, however, very familiar with the teachings of Wicca, sometimes called Witchcraft by outsiders, and with modern Druidism. I cannot speak for all Wiccans or Druids, any more than a Catholic priest or Methodist minister could presume to speak for all Christians, but I will state our basic world view. The Wiccan Rede is "An it harm none, do as thou wilt." and we take that rule--to harm no one--seriously. A basic teaching in magickal training is that everything we do comes back to us. Good returns, evil returns; therefore we seek to do good. We are life affirming religions and we seek ever to maintain the Harmonies. We are not anti-Christian, and we do not seek converts. We pray to our deities, who are pre-Christian, hold worship meetings, work spells for the healing of people and of the Earth, our Mother, and try to live harmonious and productive lives.

We are your neighbors. Some estimates place our numbers at three million in the United States. Most of our traditions require service to community. You know us, but you may not know that we are Witches and Druids. Because of public misconceptions, many of us only tell our closest friends what we believe. We are doctors and nurses, teachers and counselors, secretaries and military officers and paramedics. We are volunteers in social service agencies and environmental projects.

We are mothers and fathers who welcome our children as gifts from our Goddess. We are parents who encourage our children to read, not watch television, and grow up to be productive citizens. We worry about pollution, and rising taxes and crime in the streets. Dedicated to the Harmonies, we hope for permanent marriages, healthy and loved children, and a sense of community.

The Philadelphia Area Network of Old Religions is our local networking organization. The Witches Anti-Defamation Lobby is our responsibility. We are not satanists. We have no quarrel with Christians, unless it is that they believe there is one path to the truth, while we believe there are many.

Persons interested in WitchCraft, magick, and related subjects might wish to read:

Cunningham	<u>The Truth About Witchcraft Today</u>
Starhawk	<u>The Spiral Dance</u>
Adler	<u>Drawing Down the Moon</u>
Bonewitz	<u>Real Magic</u>

May bright blessings attend all who seek truth and harmony.

Colleen Domi O'Brien



# PLANT SALE!

Maeve Rhea of MotherChant is taking orders for annual and perennial flower plants, vegetable plants and herbs. All plants will be in pots and ready for this spring and summer.

Proceeds will be used for sundry RiverPath equipment, and supplies.

These plants are organically and astrologically grown.

Orders will be taken, based on availability, through April 15th. A "pick-up your plants" garden get-together is planned for the 13th of May. (Raindate: May 20) Other arrangements can be made at time of order.

How many?	PLANT	DESCRIPTION	PRICE per plant
_____	Tomato	"Sweet Chelsea"	.35
_____		Cherry type Super sweet needs staking	
_____	Tomato	BasketVee-Beefsteak	.35
_____		needs staking	
_____	Tomato	Better Bush no staking	.35
_____	Tomato	Quick Pick should stake	.35
_____		X-tra early, disease resistant	
_____	Tomato	Red Robin, cherry type	.35
_____		suitable for pots, tubs, city	
_____	Pepper	Cardinal, sweet green/red	.50
_____	Pepper	Earliest Sweet, Red	.50
_____	Melon	Musketeer-V.sweet	.25
_____	Cuke	Salad Bush, compact slicing	.25
_____	Cuke	Sweet Slice, non-bitter	.25
_____	Squash	Gormet Globe, summer	.25
_____	Zucchini	Spineless, itch-less	.25

Perennial	Flowers:should bloom this summer	
_____	Astilbe, shades of pink and white 20"	1.00
_____	Shasta Daisy, Summer flowers 24"	.75
_____	Coreopsis (Golden daisy)24"	.75
_____	Campanula glomerata DanesBlud	.75
_____	deep blue flowers 18-20"	
_____	Pink Tiger Lilies 24-30"	.75
_____	Dianthus-shades of pink and rose	.75
_____	Delphiniums-tall 48"	.75
_____	Delphiniums-dwarf 18"	1.00
_____	Digitalis alba RARE 36-40"	1.00
_____	Gooseneck Lysimachcia 36"	.75
_____	Platycodon Ballon Flower-Blue 24"	.75
_____	Meadow sweet (contain salicylic acid)	1.00
_____	white flowers, good for headaches, fevers	

Annual Flowers	
_____	Pelargonium (geraniums) pink, white, .50 each
_____	Phlox, yellow, white, rose 8-12" .75 six-pack
_____	Dwarf snapdragons, rose, white .75 six-pack
_____	Med & Tall snaps, white, rose .75 six-pack
_____	Ageratum, blue shades .75 six-pack
_____	Cosmos, white tall .75 six-pack
_____	Lobelia, blue shades .75 six-pack
_____	Marigold, Tiger-eyes 12" 1.00 six-pack
_____	Zinnia, Rose Pin Wheel 1.00 six-pack
_____	Sunflower, Red Velvet 48" .25 each
_____	Amaranthus, mixed .25 each
_____	Dahlia, Figaro white, 18" bedding .25 each

Herbs:	
_____	Basil, spicy globe-excel. flavor .25 each
_____	lovely to look at.
_____	Perilla, deep purple plant .75 six-pack
_____	Majoram, sweet .25 each
_____	Summer Savory .25 each
_____	Oregano, Greek .25 each
_____	Santolina, silver 1.00 each
_____	Thyme, vulgaris .25 each
_____	Lemon Balm .25 each

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ So I can call if I have questions.

Will pick up plants on May 13 (directions will be sent)

Please call for pick up arrangements.

Please Make all checks payable to RiverPath Newsletter.

THIS ADVERTISEMENT PAID FOR BY MOTHERCHANT COVEN AND RIVERPATH EDITOR.

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If you want to network and don't want to put out a lot of cash on a PO Box, this is the safest way to do it.

Send in your ad and request the Blind Address Service. Your name and address will be withheld, and a code will be added to your message. When someone sees your ad and is interested they will:

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Lady Arachne will then the stamped envelope containing the response and send it on its way. This way your address and mundane name are never revealed until you want to reveal them.

\*\*\*\*\*

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the place of Shadows that you are able to see  
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then for the Wisdom of the Shadows." Hulla of  
Köln. 893 ce.


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North Carolina

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